

VZCZCXRO8274

OO RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHSR

DE RUEHBS #0132/01 0291636

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 291636Z JAN 09

FM USEU BRUSSELS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

RHMFIS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RUEABND/DEA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 BRUSSELS 000132

NOFORN

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, INL, INL/AP, EUR/FO, EUR/ERA,
EUR/RPM, DOD FOR USD(P), DOD FOR ASD/ISA, USAID, CENTCOM
FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/26/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SNAR](#) [NATO](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#) [AID](#) [BE](#) [EAID](#)

EUN, IO

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: CAN THE EU BE A STRONGER PARTNER IN
AFGHANISTAN?

REF: A. 2008 BRUSSELS 348

[1](#)B. 2008 BRUSSELS 54

[1](#)C. KABUL 133

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRS CHRISTOPHER W. MURRAY FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d).

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Summary and comment. We currently have a window of opportunity to lay the groundwork for more EU contributions in Afghanistan. The current window may close as soon as April 3-4, 2009 -- the dates of the NATO Summit. It is unlikely that the 21 out of 27 EU member states who are also NATO Allies will make decisions about NATO contributions in isolation from their decision-making about EU and bilateral contributions. The 27 EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) Ambassadors will discuss Afghanistan on February 10, with EU Police Mission for Afghanistan (EUPOL) Head of Mission Kai Vittrup and possibly UN Special Representative Kai Eide present. The 27 EU Foreign Ministers will likely discuss Afghanistan at their February 23 General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meeting in Brussels or on the margins of the European Council meeting March 19. EU contacts have told us that the Foreign Ministers' Afghanistan discussion -- originally scheduled for the January 26 GAERC -- was intentionally postponed because many member states wanted to hold the discussion at a date closer to the NATO Summit and when EU Foreign Ministers have more information about the new U.S. Administration's intentions regarding Afghanistan.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) The European Union has participated in Afghanistan's development since 2002, and it has the potential to do much more. We should show an early political interest in the EU by consulting with it soon and at a high level. One opportunity for dialogue will be the Secretary's dinner with EU leaders in Brussels March 4, on the margins of the NATO Foreign Ministerial. In this and other

consultations, we should ask the EU to tell us how we can help the EU help Afghanistan. If the EU views itself as successful in Afghanistan, its confidence will increase, and it will be better-positioned to respond the next time we call upon it for collaboration. Success in Afghanistan can also provide concrete models for the EU to use in future engagements. In order to help the EU succeed in Afghanistan, we should encourage it to focus on specific, targeted areas that can help it shore up European public support while simultaneously helping to achieve broader goals in Afghanistan. Such areas could include boosting election support, improving rule of law and policing, and increasing regional links while strengthening border security. End Summary and comment.

Already a Major Player in Afghanistan

13. (SBU) THE FIGURES: The European Commission (EC) is a large donor to Afghanistan and is one of the few that provides a multi-year commitment (REF A). This is on top of the support that individual EU member states provide to Afghanistan. The EC provided approximately EURO 1.3 billion for the period from 2002-2006, overshooting its pledged EURO 1 billion. For 2007-2010, the EC pledged EURO 610 million (e.g. approximately EURO 150 million/year). This figure still holds in EU planning. There will likely be additional funding from the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) and other areas of the Commission that could bring the total figure closer to EUR 750 million, but

BRUSSELS 00000132 002 OF 006

that cannot be confirmed at this point. The Commission is committed to funding assistance to Afghanistan through at least 2013, and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner recently told the press that the current financial crisis will not deter the Commission's commitment to Afghanistan. The EC's funding target for the entire 2007-2013 period is at least EURO 1.3 billion. The EC's Paris conference figure of EURO 500 million was a pro-rated calculation, plus ECHO funds and some thematic programs that the EC already knew about when the conference was held in June, 2008. The EC's assistance strategy reflects the priorities laid out in the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghan National Development Strategy. EC assistance for 2008-2010 focuses on three areas: reform of the justice sector; rural development including alternatives to poppy production; and health.

Room to Grow: Election Support and Rule of Law

14. (C/NF) The EC has told us that it will provide at least the same level of assistance as it did for the previous elections in Afghanistan (approximately EURO 15 million) and possibly more. The EC has also said it plans to support election-focused training programs. The EC will send an assessment mission to Afghanistan in March to make a recommendation on whether it should send an observation mission; security concerns are the biggest obstacle to a positive recommendation. We could suggest the EU take the lead in supporting Afghan elections this year. It could do this in many ways: send an observation mission, as it did for Pakistan in 2008; train election workers; re-focus the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL) to play a bigger role in election support, as Afghan Minister of Interior Atmar has requested of EUPOL; increase EC election support funding beyond the EURO 15 million it gave for elections in 2005; coordinate member state and NGO support for elections and future governance; and use money from its EURO 10 million PRT fund to support small PRT contributors in holding election-related events. Helping ensure successful elections would be a way for the EU to build European public support for continued engagement there. Lagging public support is the obstacle EU leaders most frequently cite as preventing them from doing more in Afghanistan (REF B). We note a

Financial Times polling survey, published on January 19, that showed majorities of people in the UK, France, Italy, and Germany believe that their governments must not send more forces to Afghanistan.

15. (SBU) RULE OF LAW: The Commission is a large donor to the Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA) for Afghan police salaries, having provided EURO 200 million to LOTFA since 2002. The Commission also supports capacity building in local and regional administration, aimed at increasing the focus on rule of law in the provinces. The EC has launched a program supporting the justice sector by funding contracted advisors to improve qualification, recruitment, and career structure for judges and prosecutors and to introduce an ethics code. These activities were developed to complement EUPOL.

EU Police Mission: Should We Help Save It?

16. (C/NF) The simple fact that the EU agreed in 2007 to deploy a civilian mission in Afghanistan was a quantum leap for the EU. It showed that the EU acknowledged the need to assume some risk in order to implement its foreign policy

BRUSSELS 00000132 003 OF 006

decisions. The decision was taken after strong U.S. encouragement. Nobody in the EU disputes the fact that the EU's Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL) got off to a rocky start, with extensive logistical problems and two successive commanders widely viewed as ineffective. In recent months, however, the mission has made significant progress. It is now led by a well-regarded Danish Head of Mission, Kai Vittrup, who is a former Chief Inspector of Police for Copenhagen and a former Commander of UN policing missions, and who is eager to work closely with the United States. Vittrup has gained political approval from member states for a long list of objectives for EUPOL, based largely on Afghan Minister of Interior Atmar's recommendations. Among other things, the EU agreed to help Atmar reform the Ministry of Interior, combat corruption, and improve Kabul's security forces. (USEU forwarded internal EU documents to SCA and EUR on 12/19/08.) Furthermore, EU Foreign Ministers in May 2008 agreed to increase the size of the mission with a view toward eventually doubling its size from 200 to approximately 400 personnel. In the same May meeting, EU Foreign Ministers committed to work closely on police reform with the United States and other actors. EUPOL is already deployed to regional and provincial headquarters and to some districts, in addition to Kabul, and Vittrup aims for a wider geographic distribution. EUPOL is currently discussing with U.S. leadership in RC-EAST the possibility of EUPOL deployment there (REF C).

17. (C/NF) The biggest problem now for EUPOL is that member states are not delivering the needed resources (mainly personnel, but also budgetary support) to increase EUPOL's size and thus enable EUPOL to implement Vittrup's plans and objectives. Part of the problem is that when member states decided to increase the size of the mission, they did not know they would soon be standing up a mission in Georgia, and reinforcing another one in Gaza. The experts for these missions come from the same pool, so the demand for experts is increasing without a corresponding increase in supply. Aggravating the problem, the per diem rates for Afghanistan are the lowest of any EU mission, which contacts acknowledge makes it even harder to attract recruits, as those experts have a choice between missions. Furthermore, some member states, like Germany -- which pushed the hardest for EUPOL to agree to double its size -- are now opting to give personnel to the U.S.-led Focused District Development (FDD) program, either in addition to or instead of EUPOL. EU Council Secretariat contacts tell us that this is because some countries, like Germany, face elections, and their leaders want to be viewed by their populations as close to the new U.S. administration to gain from President Obama's popularity. These same nations view bilateral contributions

as preferable to EUPOL contributions for gaining "credit" with the new U.S. administration.

18. (C/NF) In response to this problem, EU High Representative Solana and some member states, such as the UK, have begun pushing EU member states to contribute additional resources to EUPOL. Part of the message that Solana and others are delivering is that the EU itself risks being viewed poorly by the new U.S. Administration if it does not "come through" on Afghanistan. The UK, according to contacts at its permanent representation in Brussels, is also concerned that a failure, or perceived failure of EUPOL -- for example, if EUPOL is unable to increase its size while member states are simultaneously increasing their bilateral contributions to police reform in Afghanistan -- could spell trouble for the whole future of civilian European Security and Defense Policy

BRUSSELS 00000132 004 OF 006

operations. (Note: the UK has consistently pushed ESDP toward an emphasis on civilian missions, as the UK views NATO as the appropriate place for military cooperation.) Some other contacts have conveyed concern that if the EU is seen as not coming through on Afghanistan, it could have consequences for the U.S.-EU relationship more broadly.

19. (C/NF) These concerns by officials in EU institutions as well as by member states could lead them to scramble to find ways to prevent EUPOL's failure and to ensure the EU does not falter in the eyes of the new U.S. administration. Contacts give us several arguments for why the United States should approach individual member states to encourage more contributions to EUPOL. They point out that EU missions, backed by the force of agreement at 27, provide a more stable, long-lasting commitment than bilateral contributions, which can be retracted at any time. EUPOL's current mandate runs until June, 2010, with the possibility of another three-year extension. They also note that EUPOL can attract contributions from smaller countries that would be less likely to participate bilaterally (e.g., Estonia and Slovakia).

110. (C/NF) The signals we send the EU regarding EUPOL could set the stage for our future collaboration with the EU in Afghanistan and other areas. Contacts' arguments in favor of EUPOL are valid, but individual member-state contributions to U.S.-led efforts are also valuable. We may be able to find a way to maintain both, rather than accept the zero-sum game toward which these options may lead for reasons of resource constraints, aggravated by the financial crisis. If we are able and willing to work out a new framework, we stand to gain a greater degree of influence over European police contributions as well as an increased EU role in Afghanistan for the long-term. One option might be to propose to the EU that EUPOL become a part of the overall U.S.-led police training effort in Afghanistan - if we can find a workable arrangement. Clearly, we would have redlines, and they would have theirs. Europeans must be assured, if they so ask, that EU command and control remains intact and that the EU retains high visibility for its efforts. If both sides agreed to such a proposal, we could help the EU energize EUPOL by asking individual European member states to increase their contributions to police training through the EUPOL mission rather than directly to us. Such an approach conserves unity of effort while better harmonizing U.S. and European efforts.

Regional Aspirations

111. (C/NF) Contacts have told us the EU is ready to help us politically with Afghanistan's neighborhood -- particularly in dealing with Iran and Russia. This is an idea worth exploring further with the European Union. We may also wish to consider ways in which they might be constructive partners on selective tasks. On Pakistan, the EU is actively seeking ways to increase its engagement -- hoping to hold a Heads of State-level summit under the Czech or Swedish EU presidencies

and contemplating a free trade agreement. The EU is also currently developing plans to support counter-terrorism efforts in Pakistan. The Commission provided the only international observation mission for the Pakistani elections last year. The EU is also a partner in the Friends of a Democratic Pakistan forum. On a more technical level, the EU is already involved in a variety of regional projects. The EU involvement in preparations for the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) is one example.

BRUSSELS 00000132 005 OF 006

The Commission will host an experts meeting in Brussels in March to prepare for the RECCA. We should help lead them to success in that endeavor: EU success there could pave the road for further such EU leadership in the future. The EU's still-developing Central Asia strategy is another area where there is room to grow. They have so far been reluctant to promote actively the links between South and Central Asia that we have worked to build, but we can demonstrate to member states the utility of fostering these links as a way to boost the EU effort in Afghanistan. The EU could also take the lead on regional projects related to water management.

¶12. (SBU) Meanwhile, EUR 50 million of Commission aid has been invested in the development of major border crossing posts at the borders with Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. These facilities have improved customs and border management and are already generating increased revenue from customs duties to the Afghan budget, according to the EC. Additional funding for 2009-2011 could be made available for border security projects through the Commission's Stability Instrument, a possibility we have previously encouraged. The Commission wants border security to be a main theme of the March experts meeting for the RECCA.

Other Areas of EU Focus:

¶13. (SBU) There are many additional areas in which the EU is engaged in Afghanistan. While the EC does not directly fund counter-narcotics activities -- that activity falls primarily to the UK -- the EC does support rural development programs in northeastern and eastern Afghanistan to reduce poppy dependence through alternative livelihoods. The EC claims there are encouraging signs of sustained reduction of opium cultivation in the northeast where they have been active. The Commission is also one of the three key donors to the health sector, along with the United States and the World Bank. Commission programs focus on provision of primary health services and secondary health care. The EC states its aim as lifting the coverage of basic health services from approximately 80% at present to near 100% by the end of 2010 through training of medical staff and rebuilding of health clinics. Additionally, the EC supports action for children at risk (including street children, exploitative child labor, child trafficking, child victims of war, etc.) An EUR 24 million aid package has recently been approved by the EC to sustain efforts and achievements in social protection of highly vulnerable groups and persons.

Comment

¶14. (C/NF) The NATO Summit in April will be a defining moment for our relationship with Europe -- including with the EU. European countries will be making decisions between now and the NATO Summit about whether and how they plan to increase their contributions to Afghanistan -- bilaterally, through NATO, and through the EU. The different channels have different strengths and limitations. There is value in working now to maximize European contributions through all of the different channels. If we wait until after the NATO summit to turn our attention to the EU, member states may have already exhausted their resources and political will to

do more in Afghanistan.

BRUSSELS 00000132 006 OF 006

MURRAY

.